

PROCEEDINGS
OF THE
BIOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF WASHINGTON

THE REDISCOVERY OF THE LIZARD *EUMECES*
ALTAMIRANI (DUGÈS) WITH NOTES ON TWO
OTHER MEXICAN SPECIES OF THE GENUS.

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Among the herpetological rarities collected by Hobart Muir Smith in southwestern Mexico during the summer of 1935, is a specimen of a skink, *Eumeces altamirani*, originally described by Alfredo Dugès in 1891. The type, which was collected in "las regiones cálidas del Estado de Michoacán" Mexico by Sr. Dr. Fernando Altamirano, has remained the only known specimen. Smith's specimen was obtained at Hacienda El Sabino, Michoacán, southwest of Uruapan, but on the edge of the plateau rather than in the "regiones cálidas" at lower elevation.

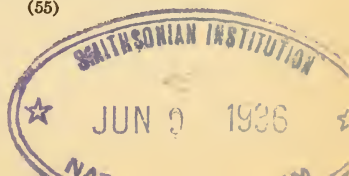
In 1932 I examined, very superficially, the type which is now in the "Alfredo Dugès Museum" at Guanajuato, Guanajuato.¹ Since data published by Dugès in the type description² is very incomplete and the description is not generally accessible, I append a more detailed description of this very rare form.

Description of species.—From no. 3424 (EHT-HS) from El Sabino, Michoacán, Mexico.

Rostral much broader than high, the part visible above about one-third area of the frontonasal; supranasals moderate, forming a suture somewhat less than half their length; frontonasal moderately large, touching frontal narrowly, broadly in contact with the anterior loreal, the sutures with the prefrontals longest; frontal relatively narrow, somewhat shield-shape, the sides equally concave, as wide posteriorly as anteriorly, the scale divided (abnormally) by a transverse suture; frontoparietals quadrangular, in contact medially by a narrow margin; interparietal of about same area as

¹ See comments Copeia, July 20, 1933, no. 2, p. 97.

² *Eumeces altamirani* A. Dug. La Naturelle, Ser. 2, Vol. 1, pp. 485-486, pl. XXXII, figs. 1-6 and a hand-colored drawing of dorsal surface which is unnumbered.



single frontoparietal; parietals diagonal, narrow, about twice as long as wide, enclosing the interparietal; nuchals five-four, all very broad.

Nasal small, at least partially divided; the ventral suture from nostril reaches rostral; anterior part generally triangular, the posterior part merely a rim about nostril; postnasal relatively very large, at least half the area of entire nasal; anterior loreal much higher than wide, touching second and third labials, as large as the posterior loreal; latter not twice as long as high; three presuboculars; five postsuboculars, the three lower very small; four supraoculars, three touching frontal; eight superciliaries, first somewhat larger than last; upper palpebral scales in contact with supraoculars save one or two anteriorly, which are separated by one or two granular scales; lower eyelid with three enlarged scutes which are separated from the subocular by two or three rows of granules (on left side these scales appear to be united into a single large scale or disk, probably abnormally); primary temporal rather small, in contact with the lower secondary; latter very large, larger than the last labial or the upper secondary temporal, subtriangular; upper secondary temporal elongate, narrow, somewhat wider posteriorly; tertiary temporal small, narrow, separated from the first nuchal by a scale which might be interpreted as the upper part of a divided tertiary; eight upper labials, the fifth smallest, eighth largest, the latter separated from the auricular lobules by two superimposed pairs of postlabial scales; three auricular lobules, the upper largest, all rather low; auricular opening high and narrow, surrounded by about 22 scales.

Mental with a labial border distinctly longer than rostral; postmental undivided; first pair of chinshields narrowly separated anteriorly; second pair much the largest, narrowly separated, but the first two pairs enclose a quadrangular scale; third pair, separated by three scales, fan-shaped, the inner and posterior border forming a continuous curve; a pair of postgenials, the inner narrow, larger than outer; seven lower labials.

Scales from parietals to above anus, are as follows: 4-5 nuchals, 7 paired but widened body scales, followed by three fused single scales; then follow 2 paired, and 44 widened scales, making a total of 69 scales. Behind this point are three widened scales, after which the median scales are paired; a pair of somewhat enlarged preanal scales which overlap the adjoining scales bordering anus; these adjoining scales in turn overlap the outer scale bordering anus; 85 subcaudal scales, the first separated from the anus by three rows of small scales.

Twenty-three scale rows around narrow part of neck; 19 scales around middle of body; 11 scales around tail at base; lateral postanal scale not strongly differentiated, apparently; a group of small scales in axilla and two or three series of small scales behind the hind limb insertion. Terminal lamellæ of toes tightly bound about base of claw; lamellar formula of fingers and toes:

$$\begin{array}{cccccc|cccc} 5 & 9 & 10 & 10 & 6 & 5 & 9 & 13 & 14 & 9 \\ \hline 5 & 8 & 10 & 10 & 6 & 5 & 9 & 12 & 15 & 10 \end{array}$$

Palm covered with nearly equal-sized scales; a small inconspicuous wrist

tubercle; two padlike tubercles on the heel, the inner the larger; the lamellar scales continue down from the base of first and fifth toes to these tubercles in unbroken series, the last three on each side not counted in the above formula.

Color (in alcohol, freshly preserved).—Light brown on head and back, the median widened scale series slightly darker than the two adjoining rows; each of the outer rows has an irregular series of darker dots on every other, or every third scale, forming rows; the median scale row has two such rows of dots; a blackish brown stripe extends from nostril, through eye to groin, involving the third lateral row entirely and parts of the second and fourth rows; the fifth and sixth rows are olive-brown; under surface of throat, and abdomen with a very light wash of tan, appearing whitish where scales are shed; pads on heel, and small wrist tubercle, white; labials black and light olive, the black either forming spots or a rim about the upper or posterior part of the labials; underside of tail distinctly darker than abdomen, but lacking spots.

Measurements.—Snout to vent, 53 mm.; width of head, 8 mm.; length snout to first nuchal, 10 mm.; foreleg, 11.5 mm.; hind leg, 16.2 mm.; tail, 76 mm.; adpressed limbs fail to touch by 4 mm.

Remarks.—Field book notes taken by Smith record the following: "*Eumeces altamirani* was found under a rock in a small rock ledge in the middle of a rice field. Water surrounded the spot, but was not near enough to soak the ground about the ledge. Another very large specimen, three times as robust and about twice as long was discovered under an adjacent rock, but it escaped into a crack in the ledge. No others were seen although many rocks were turned."

Eumeces altamirani belongs to the *Schwartzei* group of the genus, which includes *E. schwartzei* and *E. managuae*, two lowland forms which occupy territory in southeastern Mexico and Central America. All are characterized by broadened medial scales on the back. Dugès proposed a new generic name *Platypholis* (preoccupied) for this form. He states—"creo que si no hay lugar de establecer un género especial para el *Eumeces altamirani*, a lo menos se le debe conservar con justicia el nombre específico que le impongo; pero si se creyese conveniente formarlo, se le puede llamar *Platypholis*."

I am of the opinion that a different generic designation for the three species mentioned above is unwarranted.

Eumeces copei Taylor.

In a small collection of reptiles made by Mr. John Rickards of Mexico City, I find a single immature specimen of this species which agrees with the type in all pertinent characters, save that the dark lines on the back are obsolete or have, at this age, not developed. The specimen was captured Aug. 1931, at Tenancingo, Mexico.

Eumeces callicephalus Bocourt.

Three specimens of this rare Mexican species (nos. 2133, 2794, 2794a) were collected by Hobart M. Smith, June 11 and June 29, 1935, near

Magdalena, Jalisco. As the type locality is Guanajuato the specimens are well within the expected range. The color markings agree well with the type description.

Scale rows about the body are 28, 28, and 30.

All agree in the presence of a postnasal, a divided postmental, prefrontals in contact, parietals enclosing the interparietal, two pairs of nuchals (one 2-3); 7 upper labials, the sixth and seventh subequal; primary temporal with an area as large as the last labial, and only a third smaller than the upper secondary; a single large postlabial; the subcaudals not or but slightly enlarged. The two lines on the head unite on the nuchals and continue back as a dim medial stripe for a short distance; a black-brown lateral stripe. Tail rather bluish.

Adpressed limbs separated by two millimeters in the two larger forms; they touch in the smaller. Scales from parietals to above anus 58 in all; subcaudals in 2794a, 95. The postgenial is fused with its narrow, elongate, adjoining scale on one side in each of two specimens.

Snout to vent measurements 57, 59 and 46 mm.